



Black Lawrence Press

Advance Praise for *No Spare People* by Erin Hoover

“ Erin Hoover’s second collection, *No Spare People*, recalls to me the sobering effect of encountering Adrienne Rich’s work in the late ’80s. These poems deal in reality, eschewing the fantastic. And I, a recovering surrealism addict, am reminded of what it means to be a writer, woman, and mother poet trying to survive this era: “I bared / polished teeth and told the faculty in assertive yet / modulated tones that I could teach anything.” Having long played by rules so detrimental to her selfhood, the speaker of these poems shares her unvarnished truth: “I want to be able to talk to people / without having to f--- or be f---ed, yeah?” Hell, yeah. This is a deeply intellectual and expertly wrought collection.

Cate Marvin

“ In *No Spare People*’s very first poem, Erin Hoover writes: “women don’t give up our creative / selves, no child demands it, / but we are made to concede / by real people who benefit from all we relinquish.” That searching interrogation of who and what profits from our rhetorical and cultural passivity is everywhere apparent in this unforgettable collection. So too is that most precious and enviable poetic superpower—the ability to make deep love feel new, unprecedented. Hoover writes, “Before you lived, I lived inside my own / loathing. Some parents have children to replace / themselves, but we’re two instead of none.” These are hard poems in that they press far past the facile reductive binaries of good and evil, savior and saved, and into something—a lyric, a voice—that feels a little more complicated, a little more like our own world.

Kaveh Akbar

“ In the mother-daughter family of *No Spare People*, everyone is essential—one parent, one child—with truly no one to spare. This collection explores the difficulties of such economy within our particular economy, in which “deprivation will make you zealous.” Yet the poems do not give up, continually questioning the constraints of an American South in which “some days, I’m the pioneer wife, / keeper of the homestead, but others / I’m absurdly educated for a uterus.” Erin Hoover’s *No Spare People* is an indelible record of the pleasure and power of a woman’s choice to have and raise a child on her own.

Jessica Jacobs

“ I’m a long admirer of Erin Hoover’s work. At its absolute best, poetry enlarges the people, places, and things it zooms in on. The poems in *No Spare People* illuminate the injustices of income inequality, misogyny, womanhood, and motherhood in America with an expanse of time and geography. The voices of these poems arrive at their questions and epiphanies through vivid and self-aware language: “It is tempting to want always to reduce the thing to its detail. To make it small.” Read this book. Expand.

K. Iver